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(2a)

LATEST ACTS
OF THE HOLY SEE

RELATING TO THE AFFAIRS OF IRELAND

ROMÆ 1883. — Ex Typographia Polyglotta S. C. de Propaganda Fide.

*To Our Venerable Brother
EDWARD Archbishop of Dublin
Dublin.*

LEO PP. XIII.

**Venerable Brother health and Apostolical
Benediction.**

We read with satisfaction the letter you submitted to us at Rome, and have just addressed to the Clergy and people of the Diocese of Dublin. For we recognised in it the prudence and justice of your mind, which actuate you to tender counsels so opportune at a moment when Ireland is distracted partly by a desire for reform, and partly by the apprehensions of uncertain events.

We are indeed deeply solicitous about the unfortunate condition of the Catholics of Ireland; and we honour their courage tried by centuries and generations of adversity almost without intermission. For with the utmost fortitude and constancy, they have preferred to bear every misfortune rather than desert the Faith of their fathers, or fall away in the slightest degree from their ancient fidelity towards this Apostolic See: theirs too is the further glory, uninterrupted to this day, of having never failed to furnish the noblest examples of the other virtues. These are the causes which endear them to our paternal affection, and we earnestly desire that some alleviation of their sufferings may not be far distant.

At the same time we are clearly of opinion that they should be most careful not to let the reputation of their genuine and hereditary virtues be tarnished, nor rashly take any course by which they might appear to be failing in due submission to their lawful rulers. For this reason whenever serious agitation has arisen in Ireland for the defence and protection of national interests, the Roman Pontiffs have always endeavoured by counsel and admonition to tranquilise excited feelings, lest moderation be lost sight of, and justice violated, and a course, however right in itself, break out by the influence of passion into seditious violence. Our counsels were accordingly directed to induce Irish Catholics to take in all things the Church as their teacher and guide, and, conforming entirely to her precepts, to reject the allurements of iniquitous doctrines.

Thus Pope Gregory XVI on the 12th of March 1839, and again on the 15th of October 1844, admonished the Archbishop of Armagh through the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, to follow none but moderate and just courses. We ourselves following the example of Our Predecessor, on the first of last June, took the opportunity as you are aware of issuing plain instructions to all the Irish Bishops, enjoining upon the Irish people to give the utmost heed to their Bishops and not to fail in the religious observance of their duty. Shortly after, in the month of November, We assured some Irish Bishops who came to Rome to visit the tombs of the Apostles, of Our earnest anxiety for the welfare of Ireland, but We added that it was not lawful to disturb order on account of it.

This moderation in thinking and acting, best har-

monises with the doctrines and precepts of the Catholic Church, and will, We cannot doubt, serve best the interests of Ireland. For We have confidence in the justice of those who rule the country, and whose great experience is generally tempered with judgement. Ireland will far more safely and easily obtain what she wants if she will adopt only the means sanctioned by law, and avoid causes of offence.

Wherefore do you, Venerable Brother, and your Episcopal Brethren, strive to prevent the Irish people from transgressing the bounds of right and justice in these critical matters. We have received many testimonies through the Irish Bishops of respect and affection from the clergy and people: they may rest assured, that if they now submissively obey, as we doubt not they will, Our counsels and Our authority they will have fully satisfied their duty and Ourselves.

In conclusion We earnestly pray God to look favourably on Ireland, and meanwhile, as the omen of celestial blessings, on you Venerable Brother, on the other Irish Bishops, and on the whole Clergy and people, We lovingly in the Lord bestow our Apostolical Benediction.

Given at Rome, at St. Pēter's, the third day of January 1881, in the third year of Our Pontificate.

LEO PP. XIII.

*To Our Beloved Son Edward, of the Title of
S. Sabina Cardinal Priest of the Holy Roman
Church, Archbishop of Dublin.*

LEO PP. XIII.

Beloved son Health and Apostolical Benediction.

The loving good will with which We embrace the Irish people, and of which the intensity seems only to increase with the present difficulties, leads Us to follow with singular care and paternal feeling the course of events occurring among you. But this consideration gives Us more anxiety than comfort, because We do not see the public affairs of your country in that condition of peace and prosperity which We desire. On one hand the pressure of grievous hardships is still felt; on the other perplexing agitation hurries many into turbulent courses, and men have not been wanting who stained themselves with atrocious murders, as if it were possible to find hope for national happiness in public disgrace and crime.

We already knew, and have again recently seen from what you decreed in your late meeting in Dublin, that from the same causes, you, Beloved Son, and Venerable Brethren, are no less anxious than Ourselves. Trembling for the common welfare, you very properly laid down what every one must avoid in so difficult a crisis and in the midst of conflict. — So doing you certainly both acted according to your duty as Bishops,

and for the public interest. For men need the advice of their Bishops most of all when, under the impulse of some violent craving, they mistake their true interests by false judgments, and if ever they are impetuously driven, as it were, to relinquish the right course, it is the duty of the Bishops to moderate the excited feeling of the people, and by timely exhortations bring them back to justice and the moderation necessary in all things. You seasonably recalled the divine precept to *seek first the kingdom of God and His justice*, by which Christians are commanded in every action of life, and consequently in their actions also as citizens, to keep in view their eternal salvation, and place religious fidelity to duty before every temporal consideration. So long as these duties are observed it is lawful for the Irish to seek relief from their misfortunes; it is lawful for them to contend for their rights; for it cannot be thought that what is permitted to every other country is forbidden to Ireland. Nevertheless interest must be directed by justice, and it must be seriously considered that it is base to defend by unjust means any cause however just. And justice is not to be found in violence, and especially not in those secret societies which, under pretext of vindicating a right, generally end in violent disturbance of the public peace. As Our predecessors more than once, and We Ourselves have done, so you in your Dublin meeting have now given a timely warning with how much caution every good man should keep aloof from such societies. Still, so long as the danger lasts, it is for you in your watchfulness often to repeat authoritatively the warning, exhorting all Irishmen, by the holiness of the Catholic name and by the very love of their

country, to have nothing to do with the societies of this sort, which are powerless to obtain what the people rightly ask, and too often impel to crime those who have been fired by their allurements. Since the Irish are proud, and deservedly, to be called *Catholics*, which means, as St. Augustine explains, *guardians of integrity and followers of what is right* ¹⁾, let them bear out to the full their name, and even when they are asserting their rights let them strive to be what they are called. Let them remember that *the first of liberties is to be free from crime* ²⁾, and let them so conduct themselves through life that *none* of them *may suffer* the penalties of the law *as a murderer, or a thief, or a railer, or a coveter of other men's things* ³⁾.

But it is fitting that your episcopal solicitude in governing the people should be assisted by the virtue, the labour, and the industry of all the clergy. — With reference to this subject, all that you thought proper to decree concerning priests, especially the younger clergy, We judge right and suited to the circumstances. For priests, if at any time, certainly in these popular storms, must be watchful and laborious cooperators in the preservation of order. And as in proportion to the high estimation in which one is held, is his influence on the minds of others, they must endeavour to gain the approbation of the people by their gravity, constancy, and moderation in word and deed, and never take any step that may appear wanting in prudence or the spirit of conciliation. It is easily understood that the clergy will be such as the

¹⁾ Lib. *De vera Religione* n. 9.

²⁾ S. Augustinus tract. XLI in *Ioan.* n. 10.

³⁾ I Petr. IV, 15.

circumstances require, if they are early trained by wise discipline and sound direction. For, as the Fathers of Trent admonished, *the age of youth, unless it be formed from its tender years into piety and religion, never will perfectly, and without the greatest and well-nigh special help of Almighty God persevere in ecclesiastical discipline* ¹⁾).

In this way and by these means We believe that Ireland, without any violence, will attain that prosperity which she desires. For, as We signified to you on another occasion, We are confident that the statesmen who preside over the administration of public affairs will give satisfaction to the Irish when they demand what is just. This not only reason advises, but also their well known political prudence; since it cannot be doubted that the wellbeing of Ireland is connected with the tranquility of the whole Empire.

We meanwhile, with this hope, do not cease to help the Irish people with the authority of Our advice, and to offer to God Our prayers, inspired by solicitude and love, that He would graciously look down upon a people so distinguished by many noble virtues, and calming the storm, bless it with the longed for peace and prosperity. In pledge of these heavenly blessings, and in token of Our great affection, We lovingly impart in the Lord to you, Beloved Son, and Venerable Brethren, to the clergy, and to the whole people Our Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome at St. Peter's on the first day of August, 1882, in the fifth year of Our Pontificate.

¹⁾ Sess. XXIII. *De Reform.* cap. 18.

LEO PP. XIII.

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*To Our Beloved Son EDWARD, of the Title
of S. Sabina Cardinal Priest of the Holy
Roman Church, Archbishop of Dublin.*

LEO PP. XIII.

Beloved Son Health and Apostolical Benediction.

We had a new proof of the love and devotion of yourself and the other Irish prelates, Our venerable brethren, in the letter which, by their order and in their name, you addressed to Us on the 4th of October last. That letter testified the deep affection and gratitude you bear to Us for the interest We take in the prosperity of Ireland, and for the advice which, in view of the growth of popular disturbances, We thought well to give in Our letter of the 1st of August last, for the good of Our beloved children, the faithful people of Ireland.

Assuredly We have reason to congratulate you, Beloved Son, and the other Irish Bishops, for the zeal, becoming your ministry, with which you devote yourselves to calming the disturbances of your country, and to leading your faithful flock, as well as the Catholic people themselves to receive your words in willing obedience, to bear the ills of an unhappy lot in a Christian spirit, and not to allow their aims to overpass the bounds of duty and religion. But although the faithful people of Ireland give striking proofs of their zeal for religion and of their devotion to the supreme rules of the Church, still the state of public

affairs requires that they should continue to keep before their minds the counsels which, in Our affectionate regard for their well-being, We have already given them. For the adherents of evil societies, as we have been grieved to observe during the past months, do not cease to put their trust in deeds of crime, to excite the passions of the people, and by seeking remedies worse than the disease, to adopt a course calculated to lead their fellow-countrymen, not to safety, but to destruction.

Hence the faithful people should be firmly persuaded, as We have already reminded them, that the standard of honesty and utility is one and the same; that the national cause should be kept distinct from the aims, purposes, and deeds of unhallowed associations; that, while it is just and lawful for those suffering oppression to seek their rights by lawful means, it is not allowable to make use of the protection which crime affords: and that Divine Providence allots to the virtuous the enjoyments of the fruits of patience and well-doing, but subjects the evil-disposed, after their fruitless labours, to heavy punishments from God and men.

While We thus speak from Our earnest desire for the relief, peace, and happiness of Ireland, We have no doubt that you, Beloved Son, and your venerable colleagues, in united counsels and brotherly love, will continue to keep your faithful people apart from those who, led away blindly by their own passions, think that they serve their country by steeping themselves in crime, by drawing others into the same depraved courses, and by imprinting a foul stain on their country's cause.

We rejoice, Beloved Son, that you have lately so effectively discharged this duty of priestly zeal, when, in view of the snares and dangers prepared for the Catholic youth of Ireland, you issued a pastoral letter in which you publicly denounced those dangers, stirred up the faithful to vigilant care, and consulted at once for their salvation and for the interests of religion and your country.

These grave duties of the pastoral office and the public interests of the Irish people imperatively demand that the clergy should give every assistance to their Bishops and use their best efforts in calming the passions of their countrymen and checking public disturbances. For the proper exercise of this salutary influence of the sacred ministry—especially when there is question of popular meetings, in which public affairs are very warmly discussed and dissensions arise—We deem it wise to recommend that adhering strictly to the decrees you have made regarding the junior clergy, you should give leave to attend such meetings only to those ecclesiastics in whose wisdom you have special confidence, whose mature age and experience have rendered them conspicuous for prudence, wisdom, and weight, and who are, therefore, best able to guide an excited assembly to what is right and honest, to meet the fallacies of the evil-disposed, to guard the cause of justice, and be the best defenders of the most judicious courses. In this way the clergy, constituted by God guardians of public security and defenders of the common weal, will be of great utility to the country in its present disturbed state.

Finally, We cannot on this occasion omit to express to you, Beloved Son, and to Our Venerable Brethren

the Bishops of Ireland, called to share in Our solicitude, Our special feelings of praise and affection on account of the care you have taken in common for the defence of the Catholic education of your youth, and for the preservation of the Catholic University, by adopting such plans as seemed to you necessary and expedient for the establishment and maintenance of sound and solid learning, and for the diffusion of its fruits. With regard to ecclesiastical seminaries, let your attention be carefully devoted to the youths aspiring to the priesthood, that they may be diligently instructed in useful learning and in the practice of virtue, and that those who devote themselves to philosophical studies may be brought up, as far as possible, in the teaching of the Angelic Doctor.

Begging most sincerely the God of all clemency that He may by His powerful grace promote your efforts, aims, and actions, that He may make your clergy the powerful instrument of His glory, that He may in His mercy console your faithful people and enable those who have sown in tears to reap in joy, We lovingly grant the Apostolic Benediction as a testimony of Our good will to you, Beloved Son, and to all the Bishops of Ireland, as well as to the clergy and faithful confided to your charge.

Given at St. Peter's, Rome, the 1st day of January, 1883, in the fifth year of Our Pontificate.

LEO PP. XIII.

To The Most Reverend DANIEL MAC GETTIGAN Archbishop of Armagh, Primate of all Ireland and to the other Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland.

It has come to the knowledge of this Sacred Congregation of Propaganda that, with reference to certain matters affecting the Irish people and the Catholic Religion to which that people has always been most devoted, serious differences have arisen in some parts of the country, and have been carried to such an extent that a majority of the people has entirely separated from the Clergy, and has not hesitated to prefer the counsels of protestants, of infidels, and of other wrong minded persons, to the salutary guidance of the Clergy, and of their Venerable Bishops. It is to be feared that this serious evil, hitherto unknown in Ireland, will recur in similar questions in the future. Wherefore this Sacred Congregation, deeply solicitous about all matters connected with the extension and maintenance of the Catholic Faith in the countries committed by the Supreme Pontif to its care, has thought it right to exhort all your Lordships, and does now accordingly so exhort you, to apply forthwith an efficacious remedy to this evil. Surely no one can fail to see, to what an extent the faithful would be kept within the bounds of union and charity with their Clergy as well as among themselves, by the

existence of a thorough unanimity, not among the Bishops only, for of this our Sacred Congregation has no doubt, but among the whole body of the Clergy. The desire therefore of this Sacred Congregation is that all your Lordships should take counsel together respecting such questions now pending, or likely to arise, as are seen to be connected with religion, and that you should lay down a course of action with regard to them, to be observed by yourselves, and imposed on your Clergy. This is the purport of the decisions you came to at the General Synod of Maynooth in 1875: for in the XXV Chapter of the decrees, *On avoiding dissensions among ecclesiastical persons*, we find the following words; « In order that » dissensions may not occur among Bishops or other » ecclesiastical persons in Ireland, we decree that in » future, if a law is enacted or brought forward by » the Government respecting the entire Kingdom, bearing on Catholic education, on ecclesiastical property and the rights of the Church, or in any way » affecting the Church in individual dioceses or generally, no Bishop shall undertake to give effect such » law, nor approve of it, unless the other Bishops have » previously examined it, and declared in favour of » accepting it. Should there be a difference of opinion » among the Bishops on the subject or should the » question be one beyond their competence to decide, » the whole matter shall be referred to the Apostolic See, according to the old Canon of the Irish Church laid down by Saint Patrick, *If any controversies arise in this Island, let them be referred to the Apostolic See*, and according to the custom of the Universal Church. »

Let this then be your rule of conduct especially in the present circumstances, let this principle be your guide in directing the Clergy and the people, that by carefully maintaining unity, the Catholic Religion may daily flourish more and more.

This blessing I earnestly pray God, as the Giver of all good gifts, to vouchsafe to you.

Given at Rome, from the palace of the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide June 1st 1880.

JOHN CARDINAL SIMEONI
PREFECT

IGNATIUS MASOTTI
SECRETARY.

*Letter of the
Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide
to the Bishops of Ireland*

Illustrious and Reverend Lord

Whatever may be the opinion formed as to Mr. Parnell himself and his objects, it is at all events proved that many of his followers have on many occasions adopted a line of conduct in open contradiction to the rules laid down by the Supreme Pontiff in his letter to the Cardinal Archbishop of Dublin, and contained in the instructions sent to the Irish Bishops by this Sacred Congregation, and unanimously accepted by them at their recent meeting at Dublin. It is true that according to those instructions *it is lawful for the Irish to seek redress for their grievances and to strive for their rights*; but always at the same time observing the Divine maxim *to seek first the kingdom of God and His justice*; and remembering also *that it is wicked to further any cause, no matter how just, by unlawful means*.

It is therefore the duty of all the clergy, *and especially of the Bishops, to curb the excited feelings of the multitude, and to take every opportunity with timely exhortations to recall them to the justice and moderation which are necessary in all things, that so they may not be led by greed of gain to form a wrong estimate of their true interests, or to place their hopes of public prosperity in the shame of criminal acts*. Hence it follows that it is not permitted to any of the clergy to depart from these rules themselves, or